

# History

## Key Cultural Facts:

The Kalispel Indians, "River/Lake paddlers" or "camas people," as they were called by other Tribes, were semi-nomadic hunters, diggers and fishermen.

Traditionally, the Tribe inhabited a 200-mile stretch of land along the Pend Oreille River with a Tribal membership of about 3,000 people. The abundant homeland consisting of mountainous, forested land, and most importantly the river, provided the necessary natural resources for the Tribe to sustain their way of life.

Roman Catholic priests began working with the Kalispels in 1844.

In 1855, the Upper Kalispels gave up their lands and moved to the Jocko Reservation in Montana at the request of the U.S. Government.

The Lower Kalispels, of which today's Kalispel members are descendants, refused to give up their ancestral lands and continued to work toward an agreement that would allow the Tribe to remain on their homeland.

Though Congress did propose a treaty in 1872, the terms were poor and the Tribe refused to sign it. By 1874, Congress had stopped establishing treaties with Tribes altogether, leaving the Kalispels with no legal protection.

By 1875, the Tribal population had shrunk to only 395 people.

In 1914, a reservation was finally established, by Executive Order, for the sovereign Kalispel Tribe on a tiny base of flood plain and mountainside that neither resembled the original homeland in scale, nor provided economic support for the Tribe.

The reservation consisted of approximately 4,600 acres along the Pend Oreille River. In 1924, the U.S. Government allotted the entire reservation to Tribal members to encourage farming.

The Kalispels received about 40 acre allotments each of hillside or floodplain land, which was extremely difficult to farm. Comparatively, members of neighboring Tribes, such as the Spokane and Coeur d'Alene, received 160-180 acre allotments of good farmland.

As recently as 1965, there were only one or two houses on the reservation that had running water, and there was only one telephone for the whole Tribe. The average annual income for a Tribal member was approximately \$1,400 that year.

# Government Structure

## Government Structure: Pride in Leadership

The Kalispel Business Council, consisting of five members, is a self-governing entity which oversees services, programs and business endeavors. Council members are democratically elected by the tribal membership and serve three-year terms. It is notable that the current chairman, Glen Nenema, has held the Chairmanship for close to 30 years.

The mission of the Business Council is to guide tribal services and promote the positive advancement of its sovereign status.

A central theme for the Business Council is the importance of consensus. All aspects of an issue are thoroughly discussed before reaching a decision. A few examples of responsibilities held by the Business Council are:

- Creating new positions
- Protecting tribal interests
- Making or changing laws
- Overseeing business development
- Creating short and long term goals which enhance our way of life

### **Key Facts about the Kalispel Business Council**

The Chairman doesn't vote unless there is a tie.

Decisions are made by the majority vote.

Education is a major focus, as are youth and elderly issues.

The Council is in the process of creating increased training opportunities in areas such as business, marketing and various technical trades.

Meetings are open to the membership with the exception of closed executive sessions dealing with confidential matters.

Organized into office positions including Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and two Council members.

### **List of Current Council Members**

Chairman:

Glen Nenema

Vice Chairman:

Curt Holmes

Council Persons:

Darren Holmes

Yolanda Rocha

Betty Piengkham

## **Northern Quest Casino**

### **Northern Quest Casino “Where the fun never ends!”**

Northern Quest Casino helps to provide economic development for the Kalispel Tribe, as well as Airway Heights, and increases employment opportunities for tribal and community members and ensures financial support for the Camas Institute.

The Kalispel Tribe and Northern Quest Casino provide nearly 1,000 jobs, purchase over \$1.1 million dollars each month in goods and services that are local or locally-affiliated, and have contributed over \$1.5 million dollars to our community. **History**

## **Historical Background**

To the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, where we're going is just as important as where we've been. The following pages help to define the history of the Kalispel Tribe of Indians

During the mid to late 19th century, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians worked to preserve its culture and life in the midst of increasing white settlement in the area. Roman Catholic priests began working with the Tribe in 1844. In 1855, the Upper Kalispel Tribe gave up its lands and moved to the Jocko Reservation in Montana at the request of the U.S. Government. The Lower Kalispel Tribe, of which today's Kalispel members are descendants, refused to give up its ancestral lands and continued to work toward an agreement that would allow the Tribe to remain on its homeland.

During the late 1800s, while most other tribes were going through the process of having reservations established, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians had almost no relationship with the federal government. Though Congress did propose a treaty in 1872, the terms were poor, and the Tribe refused to sign it. By 1874 Congress had stopped establishing treaties with tribes altogether, leaving the Kalispel Tribe with no legal protection. By 1875, the Tribal population had shrunk to only 395 people. From 1880 to 1910, as more and more white settlers moved into their territory, the Tribe witnessed its land being taken away, but could do nothing to prevent it. Many of the white settlers filed claims under the Homestead laws and "legally" owned land which was previously home for much of the Tribe. This time period was also the beginning of the widespread introduction of alcohol, which many consider to be a fundamental source of the breakdown of the family unit.

As recently as 1965, only one or two houses on the reservation had running water, and there was only one telephone for the whole Tribe. The average annual income for a Tribal member was approximately \$1,400 that year.

The Kalispel Tribe of Indians has suffered from factors associated with remote rural areas: unemployment, inadequate housing, limited economic opportunities and prejudice. With most of the land on the reservation being unsuitable for development, the Tribe has had to seriously examine innovative ways to create opportunity for Tribal members. This innovative spirit combined with sheer determination, resiliency and community cohesiveness is what has moved the Tribe forward during difficult times.

Each year, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians steps closer to achieving its goal of self-sufficiency and increased opportunities. By working together and in close cooperation with the community, the future holds endless possibilities for growth.

## **Historical Timeline**

### **Time immemorial**

The Kalispel Tribal homelands extends from present day Plains, Montana down the Clark Fork River, all of Priest and Pend Oreille Lakes, down the Pend Oreille River into Canada, encompassing 3.5 million acres.

### **1809**

David Thompson visits Kalispel Tribe and trades with them. He produces the first known historical documents about the Tribe.

### **1810**

Records from the Lewis & Clark expedition estimate the Kalispel population to be approximately 1,600.

### **1844**

Father Andrew Hoecken establishes St. Ignatius Mission on the present Kalispel Reservation and begins teaching Catholicism.

**1875-1885**

White settlement increases.

**1887**

N.W. Indian Commission meets with the Kalispel chiefs to present an agreement intended to relocate the tribe to the Flathead Reservation in Montana. The agreement is signed by only one of the chiefs and is never ratified by Congress.

**1911**

Tribal population estimated at 100.

**1914**

Kalispel Reservation is established by Executive Order of President Woodrow Wilson.

**1965**

One or two houses have running water. One telephone for entire Tribe. Yearly average per capita income is \$1,400.

**1974**

Kalispels receive 12 buffalo from the U.S. Park Service.

**1974**

Kalispel Metal Products is established as a Tribal enterprise.

**1979**

The Kalispel Tribe opens the Sen-tu-me, rural-oriented, general store.

**1984**

The Sen-tu-me store and Kalispel Metal Products close after several consecutive years of financial losses by both entities.

**1985**

Kalispel Case Line opened for manufacturing and fabricating aluminum cases for guns, cameras, etc.

**1987**

The Tribe establishes the Kalispel Agricultural Enterprise for hay and buffalo production and management.

**1992**

Tribe develops vision statement and reorganizes Tribal Administration to better serve the Tribal community.

**1993**

Tribal buffalo herd stabilizes at 100 head.

**1994**

Albeni Falls Dam wildlife mitigation project turns 440 acres, adjacent to the northern boundary of the Reservation, over to the tribe for waterfowl and wildlife refuge.

**1995**

The Kalispel Day Care is established to provide day care services to both Tribal members and those in the surrounding communities. Located near the Tribal Headquarters, the facility is the only Washington State licensed day care in Pend Oreille County.

**1996**

The federal government proclaims 40 acres of trust land in Airway Heights, Washington, be added to the Kalispel Indian Reservation.

**1998**

The Kalispels reach a settlement with Pend Oreille PUD for license amendment for Box Canyon Dam project. This amendment includes an annual payment for use of Indian lands and resources for improvements to river environment and Tribal Natural Resource programs.

**1998**

Governor Gary Locke concurs with the findings of the Secretary of the Interior that the Airway Heights gaming project is in the best interest of the Kalispel Tribe and is not detrimental to the surrounding community.

**2001**

Northern Quest Casino opens its doors, with the goal of helping the Tribe build for the future.

**2001**

The Camas Institute opens. The Camas Institute provides programs and resources that encourage personal growth and foster physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health.

**2004**

Northern Quest undergoes a 60,000 square ft. expansion adding a family-friendly entrance, the Pend Oreille Pavilion, a new gift shop, and new eating areas.

**2005**

The Tribe begins construction of a state-of-the-art wellness center on the reservation in Usk, Washington.

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